Prossession of Wireless Sets by the Indian Red Cross Society

*449. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:†

SHRI RAM AWADESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any organisation, other than the Government/Semi-Government organisations, has been allowed to keep wireless sets;

(b) whether any action is proposed to be taken against the Indian Red Cross Society (Hqrs.), New Delhi, for keeping wireless sets of 'foreign make' without licence, in contravention of the Indian Penal Code and the Indian Telegraph Act, as reported in 'the Statesman' of 3rd November, 1986;

(c) whether some of the sets were deployed during the IX Asiad on temporary licences and that the information of their deployment was neither furnished nor it was in the knowledge of Government;

(d) if so, whether any enquiry has been instituted against the Red Cross or the officials in the Communications Ministry who are involved in this matter; and

(e) whether Government propose to ensure that any such wireless set is not misused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir. Private organisations are also allowed by way of a licence to keep wireless sets for specific purposes.

(b) No, Sir. The Indian Red Cross Society had filed applications and deposited the requisite fee for renewal of their licence which got delayed because of non-receipt of their deployment plan. Necessary licence has since been issued on obtaining the facts from the Society and its due verification.

(c) Some of the sets of the Indian Red Cross Society during the IX Asiad were deployed with prior knowledge and approval of Government.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Monitoring Organisation monitors compliance of the licensing conditions and operating parameters.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : No supplementary.

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY : The Indian Red Cross Society is an organisation to serve the poor people in times of need and it has got international obligations also. Why should it possess wireless sets of foreign make? This is something very intriguing. I request the hon. Minister to think about this particular situation.

SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, Indian Red Cross is a philanthropic organisation. Generally unless we get the operating area, we do not give a licence. They work in the case of calamities; that is why as a special case, they have been given storage licence and when an occasion arises—of drought or calamity—they apply for actual area and then we allow the actual licence for the area concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You want to supplement it? Since you have got some instruction. I thought you may like to..

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Sir, the senior and junior Ministers should sit together; otherwise there will be problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have no control over where they sit. Next question No. 450. Shri Aruna. Absent.

*450. [*The questioner* (*Shri Aladi* Aruna *alias* V. Arunachalam) was absent. For answer, vide *col.* 34 infra.]

News Coverage of Political Parties

*451. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) what was the total time of news coverage given to the ruling party at the

†The question, was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Krishna Kumar Birla.

Centre in the Doordarshan and the All India Radio from 1st March to 31st October, 1986; and

(b) what was the total time of coverage of news given to the other six recognised national political parties during the said period in the Doordarshan and the All India Radio ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Stations in the network of AIR put out nearly 180 news bulletins in different languages and dialects everyday in the Home Service. Similarly, Doordarshan Kendras telecast news bulletins in the concerned regional languages. The time devoted in those news bulletins to different political parties is not kept centrally in a compiled form.

The coverages put out by AIR in its three major central English bulletins at 0810 hours, 1400 hrs. and 2100 hrs. during September and October, 1986 in respect of the ruling party Congress (I) were 105 lines in September, 1986 and 240 lines in October, 1986. In respect of the six recognised national political parties, CPI(M), CPI, Congress (S), Janata Party, Lok Dal, B.J.P., the coverage during September, 1986 was 301 lines and in October, 1986, 369 lines.

As regards Doordarshan, the coverage given to Congress (I) in the national news telecast from Delhi from March to October, 1986 was 88.40 minutes. The coverage given to the 6 national political parties was 121.00 minutes.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : माननीय सभापति जी, मेरी पहली आपत्ति यह है कि मेरा जो प्रश्न है उसका उत्तर नहीं मिला । क्या मंत्री जी प्रश्न देखने की कोशिश करेंगे— My Question was:

(a) what was the total time of new coverages given to the ruling party at the Centre in the Doordarshan and the All India Radio from March to 21st October, 1986; and

(b) what was the total time of coverage of news given to the other six recognised national political parties during the said period in the Doordarshan and the All India Radio?

Sir, my question did not relate to any particular language or any other national language. But the reply is confined only to the English bulletins at 0810 hours, 1400 hours and 2100 hours. Therefore my submission is that the Minister has not been pleased to reply to my question.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: It is misleading.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: He is misleading the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought you said he is not leading the House.

DR. BAPU KALDATE: Are you sure you are not misleading the House?

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Am I correct, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to give judgement.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Now so far as All India Radio is concerned, there are news bulletins..

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Let him give the reply first.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Malaviya, you put your supplementary. Along with that the Minister will reply.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, he wanted specific information about the total time of new coverage given to certain political parties. But the Minister has not given that. How can he frame his supplementary?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will include that as one of the points which the Minister will have to answer.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Sir, my supplementary is that the Minister has replied that so far as AIR

as concerned, the three major central English bulletins are at 0810 hours, 2 p.m. and 9 P.M. But there are national bulletins in our official language i.e. the national language Hindi, also in Sanskrit and Urdu The Hindi news bulletins are broadcast at 6 A.M. then at 8 (.M., 2-10 P.M., 6-05 P.M., 8-05 $.M. and there is also English bulletin at 11 P.M., which the Minister has forgotten to include in his reply. Then at 11.05 P.M. in Hindi, at 9-15 P.M. in Urdu and at 6-05 P.M. in Sanskrit. My question is what is the total time of coverage relating to news about the ruling party as well as the other six recognised political parties in these bulletins?

SHRI AJIT PANJA : Sir, the hon. Member is not right in saying that the answer is not given properly. There are two differences, you must have marked in the statement. So, far as All India Radio is concerned, they compile it on line form; so far as Doordarshan is concerned, they keep it on time form. So I have stated that the time devoted in these news bulletins to different political parties is not kept centrally in a compiled form, that is, in All India Radio. The coverage given in All India Radio for Congress (I) was 105 lines in September. 1986.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: That you have already replied. That is not my question. That is already in the statement which has been laid on the Table of the House ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJIT PANJA: I am now dealing with the charge portion, that it is not given correctly. The timing of Doordarshan is given here. So far as parties are concerned, I have given. The question is together—all other parties besides the ruling party. For Doordarshan I have given the time.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: I asked about All India Radio. My supplementary is about All India Radio, not about Doordarshan.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: I think the Member has not read his own question. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The subconscious mind acts there.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, the Member has not read his own question. "What was the total time of news coverage given to the ruling party at the Centre in the Doordarshan and the All India Radio?" Not that it is only about All India Radio. So, the time compilation of AIR is not kept. It is regarding the lines. So far as Doordarshan is concerned, the time is kept and I have given it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Sir, I will repeat my question because the Minister has not replied to my question ... *(Interruptions)* ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please go on.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Sir, my second supplementary is: Why is no record being maintained by the Department for both television and All India Radio so far as news bulletins of Urdu, Sanskrit and Hindi languages are concerned?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, I have given the compilation of different political parties so far as English is concerned. But, Sir, centrally compiled form in different languages is not kept with us. But, in particular, the main news which is attracted, I have given the details about it.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: This is not my question. I asked the question as to why a record is not being kept.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you not keeping an account of every one of these languages?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: For this reason, Sir: These news are thought to be—as we get letters of public and analysis of public reaction on these periods, the timing and the news bulletins—more appreciated by a vast number. That is why

these are kept ready , and when the question was asked we did it quickly. As you know, we have to answer 15 days before the question comes and, in fact, we get three days. After we get the notice, we we get three days, compile it and answer it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are a good Minister. Otherwise I would have said, I am collecting the information and will be placing it on the Table of the House.

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the honourable Minister has kindly given a detailed account of the compilation of the lines and the time devoted by AIR to political parties. I would like to know whether there are any specific guidelines to check the newsworthiness of what the opposition political parties and other parties, before it goes into the bulletins. It is not a question of time. I would like to know whether there are any specific guidelines in this matter.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Yes, Sir. We cannot lay down some do's and don'ts but we have 18 guidelines written down and those guidelines are followed.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Sir, my question is very simple and small. In this reply some information about different political parties and the ruling party has been given. Now I would like to know how much time during 1985-86, particularly the total percentage of time of AIR and Doordarshan, has been consumed only for the projection of the Prime Minister.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI: What is this question?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: That record separately is not kept. Of course, Sir, one of the guidelines is, when the Prime Minister makes a statement, it is a policy matter for the whole nation, and we give time.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Since the question about the Prime Minister has been asked, whose every announcement is of great relevance to the nation and lays down national policies, I want to know how much time has been given to non-Congress Chief Ministers and how much time to Congress Chief Ministers because my impression is that the AIR and the Doordarshan are discriminating against Congress Chief Ministers.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, no such complaints has yet been received.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: I want to know the figures.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Sir, according to the statement, Opposition parties are getting more time and coverage...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Three times.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: . . . both on the radio and the television. You will agree with me that this is not very fair. I would like to know what the hon. Minister proposes to do to allot some more time to the ruling Congress Party.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, the suggestion is well noted.

SHRI RAJIV GANDHI: Sir, if I may take it up from the point that Atal Bihariji has made, perhaps, with his cooperation we can divide the time in the proportion of the representation in the House.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know how much time is given between national and international news and how much between political and apolitical news.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: It is a separate question, Sir.

Freedom Fighters from Orissa getting Pension

*452. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of freedom fighters from Orissa who had applied for pension under the Swatantrata Senani Samman Scheme during the last three years;

(b) the number of cases sanctioned and rejected, respectively; and